

“Spend a penny”

and other things patients say



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Introduction

This booklet was initially created in order to help GP trainees who are international medical graduates with their communication skills, particularly in preparation for their Clinical Skills Assessment (CSA).

As the booklet developed, it became apparent that it may in fact be useful for other healthcare professionals working in the United Kingdom (UK) who did not train in the UK or whose first language is not English.

The book has been divided into themes, initially relating to medications, investigations and examinations. The next part of the book relates to phrases or words that may be relevant to different specialties. If you are limited by time then just read the final chapter; it is a miscellaneous list of common phrases that patients may say.

My favourite example is “spend a penny”. I have heard stories of Doctors taking money out of their purse to give to a patient in order for them to literally spend a penny. The meaning of this phrase is ‘to urinate’. This phrase originates from when it used to cost a penny in order to use a public toilet.

Some of the words and phrases that patients say may not be appropriate for healthcare professionals to use, I have tried to mark these with an asterisk (*).

Finally, I am very keen to expand this book further so if you do come across other words or phrases that patients have said and you feel they should be included please let us know.

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1.

Prescribing Abbreviations

Latin abbreviations have been used when prescribing; the following is a list of appropriate abbreviations. It should be noted that the English version is not always an exact translation.

NKDA (no known drug allergies)

o.d. (omni die = every day)

Example:

- *Allopurinol 300mg o.d.*

o.m. or mane (omni mane = every morning)

Examples:

- *Aspirin 75mg o.m.*
- *Aspirin 75mg mane*

o.n. or nocte (omni nocte = every night)

Examples:

- *Simvastatin 40mg o.n.*
- *Simvastatin 40mg nocte*

b.d. (bis die = twice daily)

Example:

- *Naproxen 500mg b.d.*

t.d.s. (ter die sumendum = to be taken three times daily)

Example:

- *Diclofenac 50mg t.d.s.*

q.d.s. (quater die sumendum = to be taken four times daily)

Example:

- *Paracetamol 1g q.d.s.*

p.r.n. (pro re nata = when required)

Example:

- *Levomepromazine 6.25mg p.r.n.*

Stat (Immediately)

Example:

- *Normal Saline 0.9% 1L stat*

p.o. (per oris = orally)

Example:

- *Paracetamol 1g p.o.*

s.l. (sub-lingual)

Example:

- *Glyceryl Trinitrate 1-2 sprays s.l.*

i.v. (intravenous)

Example:

- *Metronidazole 500mg i.v.*

i.m. (intramuscular)

Example:

- *Cyclizine 50mg i.m.*

s.c. (sub-cutaneous)

Example:

- *Hyoscine Hydrobromide 400micrograms s.c.*

p.r. (per rectum)

Example:

- *Glycerin suppository p.r.*

p.v. (per vagina)

Example:

- *Ovestin[®] cream p.v.*

2.

Primary Care Investigations

Bowel cancer screening test (Faecal occult blood test)

Examples:

- *You should receive your **bowel cancer screening test** kit in the post*
- *My **bowel cancer screening test** was normal*

Patient explanation:

“In England, people aged 60 to 75 years are routinely offered bowel cancer screening every two years. The test kit should automatically be sent to you in the post. The test detects small amounts of blood in your faeces which you would not normally see. You obtain a sample by using a small scraper to scrape some faeces off the toilet tissue that you have just used. You then smear a small sample of faeces onto the test card which you then send in a hygienically sealed Freepost envelope to the laboratory for testing. The test does not diagnose bowel cancer, but it will tell you if you need an examination of your bowel.”

CSU (Catheter urine sample)

Examples:

- *The District Nurses sent off a **CSU** to see if I have a urine infection*
- *The **CSU** grew mixed contaminants*

ECG (Electrocardiogram)

Examples:

- *Can you do an **ECG** on this patient for me please*
- *The **ECG** shows that she is in Atrial Fibrillation*

Patient explanation:

“An ECG records the electrical activity of the heart. Small electrodes are stuck onto your arms, legs and chest, the machine detects the electrical impulses that occur with each heartbeat and records them onto paper or a computer. The test takes about five minutes and it is painless.”

Heart trace/tracing (Electrocardiogram)

Examples:

- *We need to do a **heart trace** to help find the cause of your chest pain*
- *The **heart tracing** has shown that your heart is beating irregularly*

MSU (Mid-stream urine sample)

Examples:

- *I will send off this **MSU** to see if you have a urine infection*
- *The **MSU** confirms that you have a urine infection, but we need to change your antibiotics*

Patient explanation:

“A mid-stream sample is best as the first bit of urine that you pass may be contaminated with bacteria from the skin. Pass some urine into the toilet, then without stopping the flow of urine, catch some urine in a sterile pot.”

Poo sample (Sample of faeces)

Examples:

- *We need to send a **poo sample** to the laboratory to find the cause of your diarrhoea*
- *The Bowel Cancer Screening Programme requires you to collect a **sample of your poo***

Smear (Cervical screening test)

Examples:

- *You need to book in for your **smear** as it is overdue*
- *I have had an abnormal **smear** result*

Patient explanation:

“In England, women aged 25 to 64 years are routinely offered cervical screening. This is every three years if aged 25-49 years and every five years if aged 50-64 years. The test is routinely done by the practice nurse. The test is done to prevent cancer, not to diagnose cancer. During the test, a brush is used to remove some cells from your cervix which is the neck of your womb. The cells are examined under a microscope to look for early changes that if ignored and not treated could develop into cancer of the cervix.”

Urine dip (Urine dipstick)

Examples:

- *I am going to **dip your urine** to see if you have any glucose in it*
- *The **urine dip** showed 2+ of blood*

Patient explanation:

“A dipstick is put into a fresh sample of urine to see if there is any blood, protein or sugar in it, or any evidence to suggest a urine infection.”

Wee sample (Sample of urine)

Examples:

- *Can you provide me with a **wee sample** please*
- *Please bring a **sample of your wee** when you attend for your Diabetes review*

3.

Secondary Care Investigations

OGD (Oesophago-gastro duodenoscopy)

Examples:

- *Please organise an urgent **OGD** for this patient*
- *The **OGD** found a Mallory-Weiss tear*

Patient explanation:

“An OGD is a common test used to look into the upper part of the gut. An endoscope is a thin, flexible telescope about the width of a finger. The tip of the endoscope contains a light and a video camera. You will be awake for the procedure but you will be offered some sedation to help you relax. You will lie down and an operator (usually a Doctor) then passes the endoscope through your mouth, down your gullet into the stomach and the first part of your intestine. The test usually takes about 10 minutes; it does not usually hurt but can be uncomfortable, particularly when you first swallow the endoscope.”

Camera test (Oesophago-gastro duodenoscopy or Colonoscopy or Sigmoidoscopy)

Examples:

- *You need to have a **camera test** to rule out cancer*
- *The **camera test** found a stomach ulcer*

Patient explanation:

“A sigmoidoscopy is a common test used to look into your rectum and final part of your bowel, which is called the sigmoid colon. A sigmoidoscope is a thin, flexible telescope about the width of a finger. The tip of the sigmoidoscope contains a light and a video camera. You will be awake for the

procedure but you will be offered some sedation to help you relax. You will lie down and an operator (usually a Doctor) then passes the sigmoidoscope through your anus and into your rectum and sigmoid colon. The colon needs to be empty in order to get a clear view; you will be given some special dietary instructions and some laxatives to take for the few days beforehand. The test usually takes about 10 minutes; it does not usually hurt but can be uncomfortable, particularly when the sigmoidoscope is first passed through your anus.”

Top and tail endoscopy (Oesophago-gastro Duodenoscopy and Colonoscopy)

Examples:

- *You need to have a **top and tail endoscopy** to find the cause of your bleeding*
- *I had a **top and tail endoscopy** whilst in hospital*

Patient explanation:

“A colonoscopy is a common test used to look into your large bowel, which is called the colon. A colonoscope is a thin, flexible telescope about the width of a finger. The tip of the colonoscope contains a light and a video camera. You will be awake for the procedure but you will be offered some sedation to help you relax. You will lie down and an operator (usually a Doctor) then passes the colonoscope through your anus and into your colon. The colon needs to be empty in order to get a clear view; you will be given some special dietary instructions and some laxatives to take for the few days beforehand. The test usually takes about 20-30 minutes; it does not usually hurt but can be uncomfortable, particularly when the colonoscope is first passed through your anus.”

Jelly test/scan (Ultrasound)

Examples:

- *I had a **jelly scan** when I was in hospital with abdominal pain*
- *The **jelly test** last week confirmed that I am 12 weeks pregnant*

Patient explanation:

“An ultrasound scan is a painless test that uses sound waves to create images on a screen of the organs and structures inside your body. You will lie down on a couch, lubricating jelly is placed on your skin for example on your abdomen, and the operator will place a probe a bit like a thick, blunt pen on top of the jelly. The operator moves the probe over the surface of the skin to get views from different angles. The scan takes 15-45 minutes depending on what part of the body is being examined.”

Heart monitor (24 hour or 7 day Electrocardiogram)

Examples:

- *We need to put you on a **heart monitor***
- *The **heart monitor** has shown that he has Paroxysmal Atrial Fibrillation*

Patient explanation:

“This test is where you wear a small monitor which constantly records your heart rhythm. The test records the electrical activity of your heart whilst you are walking about and doing your normal activities. It aims to detect abnormal heart rhythms that come and go. The electrical activity is usually recorded for 24 hours or 7 days”.

Treadmill Test (Exercise Electrocardiogram)

Examples:

- *I am going to refer you for a **treadmill test***
- *The **treadmill test** has confirmed that you have angina*

Patient explanation:

“An ECG records the electrical activity of the heart. Small electrodes are stuck onto your arms, legs and chest, the machine detects the electrical impulses that occur with each heartbeat and records them onto paper or a computer. An exercise ECG is done when the recording is taken whilst you exercise, usually on a treadmill.”

Jelly test of your heart (Echocardiogram)

Examples:

- *I am organising a **jelly test of your heart** to see how well your heart is working*
- *The **jelly test of my heart** showed that my heart failure is getting worse*

Patient explanation:

“An echocardiogram is a painless test that uses sound waves to create images on a screen of the structure and function of your heart. You will lie down on a couch, lubricating jelly is placed on your chest, and the operator will place a probe a bit like a thick, blunt pen on top of the jelly. The operator moves the probe over the surface of the skin to get views from different angles. The scan takes 15-30 minutes.”

ECHO (Echocardiogram)

Examples:

- *You need to have an **ECHO***
- *The **ECHO** showed moderate left ventricular dysfunction*

Patient explanation:

See page 14

Doughnut scan (Computerised Tomography/CT scan)

Examples:

- *I had a **doughnut scan** when I had my head injury*
- *My wife had a **doughnut scan**, it confirmed that she had a stroke*

Patient explanation:

“A CT scan is a specialised x-ray test that can create quite clear pictures of the inside of your body. The CT scanner looks like a giant thick ring or a doughnut. You lie on the couch which slides through the middle of the ring until the part of your body that needs to be scanned is within the ring. The CT scan is painless, you will be asked to stay as still as possible otherwise the scan pictures may be blurred. The scan can take 5-30 minutes depending on which part(s) of the body are being scanned.”

MRI scan (Magnetic Resonance Imaging)

Examples:

- *I had an **MRI scan** of my back*
- *I think we need to organise an **MRI scan** of your knee*

Patient explanation:

“An MRI scan is a safe and painless test that can create detailed pictures of the inside of your body. The MRI scanner looks like a tunnel about 1.5m long.

You lie on the couch which slides into the tunnel. The MRI scan is painless, you will be asked to stay as still as possible otherwise the scan pictures may be blurred. The scan can take 15-40 minutes depending on which part(s) of the body are being scanned. The scanner is noisy so you may be given earplugs or headphones so you can listen to some music.”

Brain trace/tracing (Electroencephalograph/EEG)

Examples:

- *You need to have a **tracing of your brain** to confirm if you have epilepsy*
- *The **brain trace** was normal*

Patient explanation:

“An EEG is a test to help diagnose epilepsy. It records the electrical activity of the brain, however a negative test does not rule out epilepsy. The machine records electrical signals from your brain, it does not put any electricity into your brain or body. The operator will attach several small electrodes to your scalp; wires from the electrodes are connected to the EEG machine. The machine detects the electrical signals and records them on to paper or a computer. The test takes about 20-30 minutes.”

The blowing test (Peak Flow Meter or Spirometry)

Examples:

- *I have come in for the results of my **blowing test** which I had as part of my COPD review*
- *I have been doing the **blowing test** before and after using my inhaler*

Patient explanations:

“A peak flow meter is a small device that measures the fastest rate of air that you can blow out from your lungs. The test can help diagnose and monitor lung conditions such as asthma. First you breathe in fully and then seal your lips around the mouthpiece of the peak flow meter. You then blow out as fast as you. The test is usually repeated three times with the highest value recorded.”

“Spirometry is a test that can help diagnose and monitor various lung conditions. The test looks at how well your lungs work and how well you breathe in and out. First you breathe in fully and then seal your lips around the mouthpiece of the spirometer. You then blow out as fast and as far as you can until your lungs feel completely empty, this can take several seconds.”

4.

Explaining Examinations

Hop/jump/pop up on the couch

Examples:

- *Can you **hop up** on the couch so I can examine you?*
- *Can you **jump up** on the couch so I can examine you?*
- *Can you **pop up** on the couch so I can examine you?*

Look at the back of your eye (Fundoscopy)

Examples:

- *I need to **look at the back of your eye** with my torch*
- *I am going to come quite close so I can **look at the back of your eye***

Say aaaah (Open mouth/throat examination)

Examples:

- *Can you **say aaaah**?*
- *Please **say aaaah** for me*

Feeling for lumps and bumps (Lymph node examination)

Examples:

- *I am just **feeling for lumps and bumps***
- *I need to examine you for **lumps and bumps***

Listen to your chest (Auscultate chest)

Examples:

- *I just need to **listen to your chest***
- *Can I **listen to your chest** please?*

Tap on your back (Percuss chest)

Examples:

- *I am just going to **tap on your back***
- *When I **tapped on your back** it sounded like you may have some fluid in your lungs*

Listen to your ticker (Auscultate heart)

Examples:

- *Please hold your breath whilst I **listen to your ticker***
- *The Doctor **listened to my ticker** and said that I have a murmur*

Check your breasts (Breast examination)

Examples:

- *Do you regularly **check your breasts**?*
- *I need to **check your breasts** for lumps*

Feel your tummy (Abdominal examination/palpation)

Examples:

- *Can I **feel your tummy** please?*
- *You appeared to be in a lot of pain when I was **feeling your tummy***

Poke and a prod (Palpation)

Examples:

- *The Doctor gave me a **poke and a prod***
- *Once he had **poked and prodded** me, he said I had appendicitis*

Examine your back passage (Rectal examination)

Examples:

- *I would like to **examine your back passage** to look for a cause of the bleeding*
- *Can I **examine your back passage** please?*

Digital examination (Rectal examination)

Examples:

- *Can I do a **digital examination** on you?*
- *I would like to do a **digital examination** please*

Examine you down below (Genital examination)

Examples:

- *The Doctor **examined me down below***
- *I need to **examine you down below** to see what is the cause of your symptoms*

Internal examination (Vaginal or rectal examination)

Examples:

- *I need to do an **internal***
- *The Doctor did an **internal examination** and said that I had a polyp*

5.

Describing Good Health

The following phrases are responses you may receive to the question “How are you?” when patients are describing good health.

100%

Example:

- *I feel 100%*

110%

Example:

- *I feel 110% better*

A million dollars

Example:

- *I feel like a million dollars*

A.O.K.

Example:

- *I'm A.O.K.*

Awesome

Example:

- *I feel awesome*

Back on track

Example:

- *I'm **back on track** now that my chest infection has cleared up*

Brand new

Example:

- *I feel **brand new** now I've had my knee replacement*

Can't complain

Example:

- *I **can't complain***

Champion

Example:

- *I feel **champion***

Clean bill of health

Example:

- *My doctor gave me a **clean bill of health***

Cloud 9

Example:

- *I feel like I am on **cloud 9***

Could be worse

Example:

- *It could be worse*

Couldn't be better

Example:

- *I couldn't be better*

Feeling grand

Example:

- *I'm feeling grand*

Fit as a fiddle

Example:

- *I feel as fit as a fiddle*

Fit as the butcher's dog

Example:

- *I feel fit as the butcher's dog*

Good as gold

Example:

- *I'm good as gold*

Good shape

Example:

- *I am in **good shape***

Hunkey dorey

Example:

- *Everything is **hunkey dorey***

Like a new man/woman

Examples:

- *I feel **like a new man***
- *I feel **like a new woman***

Musn't grumble

Example:

- *I **musn't grumble***

Not too bad

Example:

- *I'm **not too bad***

On top of the world (to be very happy about something)

Example:

- *Since I have had a week off work I have felt **on top of the world***

Over the moon (very happy)

Example:

- *I'm over the moon*

Peachy

Example:

- *Life is peachy*

Picture of health

Example:

- *I'm a picture of health*

Right as rain

Example:

- *I feel right as rain*

Rude health

Example:

- *I'm in rude health*

Ship shape

Example:

- *I'm in ship shape*

Shit* hot

Example:

- *I feel **shit hot***

Sound as a pound

Example:

- *I'm **sound as a pound***

Spot on

Example:

- *I feel **spot on***

Surviving

Example:

- *I'm **surviving***

Sweet as bru

Example:

- *I'm **sweet as bru***

The dog's bollocks*

Example:

- *I feel like **the dog's bollocks***

The mutt's nuts*

Example:

- *I feel like **the mutt's nuts***

Tickety boo

Example:

- *I feel **tickety boo***

Ticking along nicely

Example:

- *Everything is **ticking along nicely***

Tip top

Example:

- *I feel in **tip top** condition*

Top banana

Example:

- *Everything is **top banana***

Top dog

Example:

- *I feel **top dog***

Top form

Example:

- *I'm on top form*

Top notch

Example:

- *I feel top notch*

6.

Describing Bad Health

The following phrases are responses you may receive to the question “How are you?” when patients are describing bad health.

Below/under par

Examples:

- *I feel below par*
- *I feel under par*

Broken

Example:

- *I feel broken*

Burning up (Fever)

Example:

- *I have been burning up all night*

Crap*

Examples:

- *I feel crap*
- *I look like crap*

Cream crackered (Tired)

Example:

- *I feel **cream crackered***

Crook

Example:

- *I'm feeling **crook***

Crumbly

Example:

- *I feel **crumbly***

Dead and buried

Example:

- *I feel like I'm **dead and buried***

Death warmed up

Example:

- *I feel like **death warmed up***

Down in the dumps (Low mood)

Example:

- *I feel **down in the dumps***

Falling apart

Example:

- *I'm falling apart*

Falling to bits/pieces

Examples:

- *I'm falling to bits*
- *I'm falling to pieces*

Feel rotten

Example:

- *I feel rotten*

Fucked*

Examples:

- *I feel fucked*
- *My body is fucked*

Funny (Unwell)

Example:

- *I'm feeling a bit funny*

Gone downhill

Example:

- *I feel like I have gone downhill since I had a stroke*

Putting down

Example:

- *I need **putting down***

Putting out to pasture

Example:

- *I need **putting out to pasture***

Knackered (Tired)

Example:

- *I feel **knackered***

Not firing on all cylinders

Example:

- *I'm **not firing on all cylinders***

Off colour

Example:

- *He has been looking **off colour** all week*

Out of sorts

Example:

- *I've been feeling **out of sorts***

Queer

Example:

- *I'm feeling **queer***

Pants

Example:

- *I'm feeling a bit **pants***

Peaky

Example:

- *I feel a bit **peaky***

Poorly

Example:

- *I have been feeling **poorly** for days*

Ropey

Example:

- *I'm feeling absolutely **ropey***

Rough

Example:

- *I haven't felt this **rough** for a long time*

Rubbish

Example:

- *I'm feeling **rubbish** at the moment*

Run down

Example:

- *I've been feeling so **run down** recently*

Shattered (Tired)

Example:

- *I feel completely **shattered***

Shit*

Examples:

- *I feel **shit***
- *I look like **shit***

Sick as a dog

Example:

- *I feel **sick as a dog***

Two left feet

Example:

- *I feel like I've got **two left feet***

Under the weather

Example:

- *I have been feeling **under the weather** all week*

Up shit* creek

Example:

- *I think I'm **up shit creek***

Worn out (Tired)

Example:

- *I'm feeling totally **worn out***

7. Cardiovascular

Ticker (Heart)

Examples:

- *My husband died from a problem with his **ticker***
- *I am worried about my **ticker***

Old ticker (Heart)

Examples:

- *My **old ticker** is not as strong as it used to be*
- *I think my **old ticker** is giving up*

Heart attack (Myocardial Infarction/MI)

Examples:

- *I had a **heart attack** last year*
- *The pain was so bad I thought I was having a **heart attack***

Irregular heart (Atrial Fibrillation/AF)

Examples:

- *I am on Warfarin for my **irregular heart***
- *I have had an **irregular heart** for five years*

Warfarin level (International Normalised Ratio/INR)

Examples:

- *I have my **Warfarin level** checked weekly*
- *I am next due to have my **Warfarin level** checked on Friday*

Water tablets (Diuretics)

Examples:

- *The **water tablets** have really helped my leg swelling*
- *I am always going to the toilet because I am on **water tablets***

ECG (Electrocardiogram)

Examples:

- *Can you do an **ECG** on this patient for me please*
- *The **ECG** shows that she is in Atrial Fibrillation*

Patient explanation:

See page 8

Heart trace/tracing (Electrocardiogram)

Examples:

- *We need to do a **heart trace** to help find the cause of your chest pain*
- *The **heart tracing** has shown that your heart is beating irregularly*

Patient explanation:

See page 8

Heart monitor (24 hour or 7 day Electrocardiogram)

Examples:

- *We need to put you on a **heart monitor***
- *The **heart monitor** has shown that he has Paroxysmal Atrial Fibrillation*

Patient explanation:

See page 13

Treadmill Test (Exercise Electrocardiogram)

Examples:

- *I am going to refer you for a **treadmill test***
- *The **treadmill test** has confirmed that you have angina*

Patient explanation:

See page 14

Jelly test of your heart (Echocardiogram)

Examples:

- *I am organising a **jelly test of your heart** to see how well your heart is working*
- *The **jelly test of my heart** showed that my heart failure is getting worse*

Patient explanation:

See page 14

ECHO (Echocardiogram)

Examples:

- *You need to have an **ECHO***
- *The **ECHO** showed moderate left ventricular dysfunction*

Patient explanation:

See page 14

8.

Gastroenterology

Queasy (Nauseous)

Examples:

- *I have been feeling **queasy** since I ate at that restaurant last night*
- *I always get **queasy** when travelling on boats*

Sick (Nausea or Vomit)

Examples:

- *I am feeling **sick** (nauseous)*
- *I have been **sick** (vomited) three times this morning*

Chunder* (Vomit)

Example:

- *I think I am about to **chunder***
- *I drank so much last night I thought I was going to **chunder***

Spew* (Vomit)

Example:

- *I think I am going to **spew***
- *I have been **spewing** all night*

Puke* (Vomit)

Example:

- *I always **puke** when I go out drinking*
- *My **puke** had some blood in it*

Chucked up* (Vomit)

Example:

- *I kept **chucking up** last night*
- *I have been **chucking up** ever since I ate at that restaurant*

Throw up (Vomit)

Example:

- *I have been **throwing up** all night*
- *I last **threw up** at 5am*

Heartburn (Dyspepsia)

Examples:

- *I suffer with really bad **heartburn** every time I eat spicy food*
- *I have had **heartburn** throughout this pregnancy*

Poo (Faeces)

Examples:

- *When did you last have a **poo**?*
- *He has not had a **poo** for three days*

Number two (Faeces)

Examples:

- *I haven't been for a **number two** for days*
- *He says it hurts every time he goes for a **number two***

Crap* (Faeces)

Examples:

- *I haven't been for a **crap** since the weekend*
- *I cannot stop **crapping***

Shit* (Faeces)

Examples:

- *There has been some blood when I have taken a **shit** recently*
- *My **shit** is very smelly at the moment*

Shitting* bricks (Constipation)

Examples:

- *I have been **shitting bricks***
- *It feels like I am **shitting bricks***

Bunged up (Constipated)

Example:

- *I'm really **bunged up***
- *I have been **bunged up** for a week now*

Turd* (Faeces)

Example:

- *My **turds** are pale and float*
- *My **turds** are very hard*

The squits (Diarrhoea)

Examples:

- *I've got **the squits** at the moment*
- *He had **the squits** last week*

The runs (Diarrhoea)

Examples:

- *I've been off work with **the runs***
- *She has got **the runs***

Runny poos (Diarrhoea)

Example:

- *My child has had **runny poos** since I started weaning him*
- *His **poos** are very **runny***

Dickie belly (Upset stomach e.g. diarrhoea)

Example:

- *I have got a **dickie belly***
- *I have had a **dickie belly** ever since eating that curry*

Dodgy stomach (Upset stomach e.g. diarrhoea)

Example:

- *I have got a **dodgy stomach***
- *I have had a **dodgy stomach** ever since eating that curry*

Dehli belly (Upset stomach e.g. travellers' diarrhoea)

Example:

- *I got **Dehli belly** whilst on holiday*
- *When I had **Dehli belly** I was going to the toilet every 30 minutes*

Shitting* through the eye of a needle (Diarrhoea)

Example:

- *I've been **shitting through the eye of a needle** since I ate at that restaurant*
- *She has been **shitting through the eye of a needle** from taking all those laxatives*

Piles (Haemorrhoids)

Example:

- *I've got awful **piles**, they keep me awake*
- *I've suffered with **piles** since my last pregnancy*

Farmer Giles (Haemorrhoids)

Example:

- *My **Farmer Giles** are bleeding*
- *Every time I am constipated my **Farmer Giles** get worse*

Tummy (Abdomen)

Example:

- *She was sent home from school with a **tummy** ache*
- *Her **tummy** has been hurting all night*

Belly (Abdomen)

Example:

- *My **belly** feels sore*
- *I think your **belly** is aching because you are constipated*

Tail end (Anus)

Example:

- *I have been bleeding from my **tail end***
- *My **tail end** is sore every time I open my bowels*

Rear end (Anus)

Example:

- *My **rear end** has been very sore*
- *I have an itchy **rear end***

Bum hole* (Anus)

Example:

- *I have had some pain around my **bum hole***
- *My **bum hole** is burning*

Bum (Anus or Buttocks)

Example:

- *My **bum** is sore*
- *I cannot sit on my **bum***

Backside (Anus or Buttocks)

Example:

- *I've got a pain in my **backside***
- *My **backside** has been aching*

Arse* (Anus or Buttocks)

Example:

- *My **arse** is very sore*
- *It hurts every time I sit on my **arse***

Wind (Flatus)

Example:

- *I have been very **windy** recently*
- *I've got terrible trapped **wind***

Fart (Flatus)

Example:

- *I have not **farted** or had my bowels open*
- *My **farts** are very offensive*

Poo sample (Sample of faeces)

Examples:

- *We need to send a **poo sample** to the laboratory to find the cause of your diarrhoea*
- *The Bowel Cancer Screening Programme requires you to collect a **sample of your poo***

Bowel cancer screening test (Faecal occult blood test)

Examples:

- *You should receive your **bowel cancer screening test** kit in the post*
- *My **bowel cancer screening test** was normal*

Patient explanation:

See page 7

OGD (Oesophago-gastro duodenoscopy)

Examples:

- *Please organise an urgent **OGD** for this patient*
- *The **OGD** found a Mallory-Weiss tear*

Patient explanation:

See page 11

Camera test (Oesophago-gastro duodenoscopy or Colonoscopy or Sigmoidoscopy)

Examples:

- *You need to have a **camera test** to rule out cancer*
- *The **camera test** found a stomach ulcer*

Patient explanation:

See page 11

Top and tail endoscopy (Oesophago-gastro Duodenoscopy and Colonoscopy)

Examples:

- *You need to have a **top and tail endoscopy** to find the cause of your bleeding*
- *I had a **top and tail endoscopy** whilst in hospital*

Patient explanation:

See page 12

9. Musculoskeletal

Bow legs (Genu varum)

Examples:

- *I think she has **bow legs***
- *My grandmother had **bow legs***

Bunion (Hallux valgus)

Examples:

- *I'm due to have a **bunion** operations*
- *My **bunions** are really hurting*

Clicky hips

Examples:

- *My child has **clicky hips***
- *I had **clicky hips** when I was a baby*

Jack Jones (Back bone)

Examples:

- *My **Jack Jones** has been hurting this week*
- *I'm waiting for a scan of my **Jack Jones***

Knock knees (Genu valgum)

Examples:

- *I've always had **knock knees***
- *I'm worried that my son has **knock knees***

10.

Neurology

Stroke (Cerebral Infarction)

Examples:

- *My wife had a **stroke** last week*
- *My husband is currently on the **stroke** ward*

Mini-stroke (Transient Ischaemic Attack/TIA)

Examples:

- *I had a **mini-stroke** last year*
- *I was told by the hospital that I had a **mini-stroke***

Came over all funny

Examples:

- *He was ok one minute then he **came over all funny***
- *This morning I **came over all funny***

Giddy

Examples:

- *I have been feeling **giddy** all week*
- *I get **giddy** every time I stand up*

Muzzy

Examples:

- *I keep waking up with a **muzzy** head*
- *Everything feels all **muzzy***

Swimmy

Examples:

- *My head is feeling **swimmy***
- *Everything feels **swimmy***

Woozey

Examples:

- *I feel **woozey***
- *When I get out of bed I feel **woozey***

Doughnut scan (Computerised Tomography/CT scan)

Examples:

- *I had a **doughnut scan** when I had my head injury*
- *My wife had a **doughnut scan**, it confirmed that she had a stroke*

Patient explanation:

See page 15

MRI scan (Magnetic Resonance Imaging)

Examples:

- *I had an **MRI scan** of my back*
- *I think we need to organise an **MRI scan** of your knee*

Patient explanation:

See page 15

Brain trace/tracing (Electroencephalograph/EEG)

Examples:

- *You need to have a **tracing of your brain** to confirm if you have epilepsy*
- *The **brain trace** was normal*

Patient explanation:

See page 16

11.

Obstetrics and Gynaecology

Abortion (Termination of pregnancy)

Examples:

- *I want to be referred for an **abortion***
- *I had an **abortion** when I was a teenager*

Bun in the oven (Pregnant)

Examples:

- *I've got a **bun in the oven***
- *We're hoping to have a **bun in the oven** soon*

Down below (Genitalia)

Examples:

- *I've got a problem **down below***
- *I've had a discharge from **down below***

Eating for two (Pregnant)

Examples:

- *I'm **eating for two***
- *I've put on lots of weight, but I have been **eating for two***

Fanny* (Female genitalia)

Examples:

- *My **fanny** is very itchy and sore*
- *I've had a smelly discharge from my **fanny***

I'm expecting (Pregnant)

Examples:

- *I'm **expecting** in the Autumn*
- *We're **expecting** twins*

Monthly (Menstruation)

Examples:

- *I've got my **monthly**; can you examine me next week?*
- *I always seem to be grumpy at the time of my **monthly***

Morning after pill (Emergency contraception)

Examples:

- *I need the **morning after pill** Doctor*
- *I was sick after taking the **morning after pill***

Period (Menstruation)

Examples:

- *Are your **periods** regular?*
- *What are your **periods** like?*

Preggers* (Pregnant)

Examples:

- *I can't drink because I'm **preggers***
- *This is the third time that I've been **preggers***

Privates (Genitalia)

Examples:

- *My **privates** are very itchy*
- *I've got a smelly discharge coming from my **privates***

Pubes* (Pubic hair)

Examples:

- *I've got a painful spot in my **pubes***
- *My **pubes** are really itchy*

Smear (Cervical screening test)

Examples:

- *You need to book in for your **smear** as it is overdue*
- *I have had an abnormal **smear** result*

Patient explanation:

See page 9

Termination (Termination of pregnancy)

Examples:

- *I want to be referred for an **termination***
- *I had an **termination** when I was younger*

The blob* (Menstruation)

Examples:

- *I can't be pregnant as I'm on **the blob***
- *Can you examine me another time as I'm on **the blob**?*

The Pill (Oral contraceptive pill)

Examples:

- *Can I get some more of my **pill**?*
- *I forgot to take my **pill** last night*

The Red Sea* (Menstruation)

Examples:

- *I'm on my **Red Sea** holiday*
- ***The Red Sea** is here this week*

Time of the month (Menstruation)

Examples:

- *I get painful breasts around the **time of the month***
- *He knows it's my **time of the month** as I get very grumpy*

Up the duff* (Pregnant)

Examples:

- *My wife is **up the duff***
- *They didn't use a condom and now she is **up the duff***

12. Respiratory

Coughing my guts up

Examples:

- *I cannot stop **coughing my guts up***
- *She has been **coughing her guts up** for days*

Fruity cough (Productive cough)

Examples:

- *I've had a **fruity cough***
- *I have been feeling **out of breath** recently*

Muck (Phlegm)

Examples:

- *I have a **mucky cough***
- *I have been coughing up green **muck***

Out of breath (Short of breath)

Examples:

- *I get **out of breath** when I walk up the stairs*
- *I have been feeling **out of breath** recently*

Puffer (Inhaler)

Examples:

- *I've got two **puffers***
- *My blue **blue puffer** (Salbutamol) has run out*

Swallowing razor blades (Sore throat)

Example:

- *I feel like I have been **swallowing razor blades***

The blowing test (Peak Flow Meter or Spirometry)

Examples:

- *I have come in for the results of my **blowing test** which I had as part of my COPD review*
- *I have been doing the **blowing test** before and after using my inhaler*

Patient explanations:

See page 17

13.

Urology

Ball bag* (Scrotum)

Examples:

- *My **ball bag** is very itchy*
- *I have noticed some small spots on my **ball bag***

Balls (Testicles)

Examples:

- *I think I've got a lump in one of my **balls***
- *One of my **balls** has been painful and looks bruised*

Bollocks* (Testicles)

Examples:

- *I've found a lump above one of my **bollocks***
- *My **bollocks** have been very swollen*

Crown jewels (Male genitalia)

Examples:

- *I have been having a problem with my **crown jewels***
- *My **crown jewels** are very itchy*

CSU (Catheter urine sample)

Examples:

- *The District Nurses sent off a **CSU** to see if I have a urine infection*
- *The **CSU** grew mixed contaminants*

Down below (Genitalia)

Examples:

- *I've got a problem **down below***
- *I've had a discharge from **down below***

Get it up (Erection)

Examples:

- *I can't **get it up** anymore*
- *I have been having problems **getting it up***

Jimmy Riddle (To urinate)

Examples:

- *I need to go for a **Jimmy Riddle***
- *I have to get up in the night to go for a **Jimmy Riddle***

MSU (Mid-stream urine sample)

Examples:

- *I will send off this **MSU** to see if you have a urine infection*
- *The **MSU** confirms that you have a urine infection, but we need to change your antibiotics*

Patient explanation:

See page 8

Nads (Testicles)

Examples:

- *I was kicked in the **nads** at school today*
- *My **nads** have been aching*

Number one (to urinate)

Examples:

- *I haven't been for a **number one** all day*
- *It hurts when I go for a **number one***

Nuts* (Testicles)

Examples:

- *I was kicked in the **nuts** whilst playing football at the weekend*
- *My **nuts** have been aching a lot recently*

Piss* (Urine)

Examples:

- *There is blood in my **piss***
- *I have to get up in the night to go for a **piss***

Prince Albert (Pierced penis)

Examples:

- *I think my **Prince Albert** is infected*
- *I've got some pus near my **Prince Albert***

Privates (Genitalia)

Examples:

- *My **privates** are very itchy*
- *I've got a smelly discharge coming from my **privates***

Spend a penny (To urinate)

Examples:

- *I need to **spend a penny***
- *I'm having trouble when I go to **spend a penny***

Tinkle (To urinate)

Examples:

- *I need to go for a **tinkle** every 30 minutes*
- *I seem to be getting up in the night to go for a **tinkle***

Todger (Penis)

Examples:

- *I've got some spots on my **todger***
- *I've been having problems with my **todger***

Urine dip (Urine dipstick)

Examples:

- *I am going to **dip your urine** to see if you have any glucose in it*
- *The **urine dip** showed 2+ of blood*

Patient explanation:

See page 9

Water infection (Urinary tract infection)

Examples:

- *I keep getting **water infections***
- *I think I have a **water infection***

Water works (Genito-urinary system)

Examples:

- *My **water works** aren't working properly*
- *I think I have a **water works** infection*

Wee (Urine)

Examples:

- *It hurts when I go for a **wee***
- *Sometimes I leak **wee** when I cough or sneeze*

Weeing glass/razor blades (Dysuria)

Examples:

- *I feel like I am **weeing glass***
- *It feels like I am **weeing razor blades***

Wee sample (Sample of urine)

Examples:

- *Can you provide me with a **wee sample** please*
- *Please bring a **sample of your wee** when you attend for your Diabetes review*

Willy (Penis)

Examples:

- *He keeps complaining that his **willy** hurts*
- *The end of his **willy** balloons when he passes urine*

Winkie (Penis)

Examples:

- *The end of his **winkie** has been very red*
- *My son keeps playing with his **winkie** in public*

Winkle (Penis)

Examples:

- *He has had a rash on his **winkle** since last week*
- *He has been complaining that his **winkle** is sore*

14.

Smoking and Alcohol

Baccy (Tobacco)

Examples:

- *I only smoke **baccy***
- *I smoke 50g **baccy** each week*

Ciggy/Ciggies (Cigarettes)

Examples:

- *I last smoked a **ciggy** 20 years ago*
- *I need some help giving up **ciggies***

Fags (Cigarettes)

Examples:

- *I smoke 20 **fags** a day*
- *I am trying to give up the **fags***

Booze (Alcohol)

Examples:

- *I only drink **booze** at weekends*
- *My wife keeps telling me I need to give up the **booze***

Detox (Alcohol detoxification)

Examples:

- *I need to have a **detox***
- *My husband wants me to go in for a **detox***

Dry (To abstain from alcohol)

Examples:

- *I've been **dry** for 5 years*
- *I want to get **dry***

Eye opener (alcoholic drink upon waking up)

Examples:

- *Do you ever need an **eye opener**?*
- *I always need an **eye opener** to help me face the day*

Hair of the dog (a small alcoholic drink intended to cure a hangover)

Examples:

- *I need a **hair of the dog***
- *Once I've had a **hair of the dog** I will feel better*

Hammered* (to be drunk)

Examples:

- *I got **hammered** last night*
- *I haven't been **hammered** for months*

Pissed* (To be drunk)

Examples:

- *I was so **pissed** I passed out and ended up in A&E*
- *I get **pissed** on a few glasses of wine*

Squiffy (slightly drunk)

Examples:

- *I've been feeling a bit **squiffy***
- *I get a bit **squiffy** when I drink wine*

15. Illicit Drugs

Illicit drugs often have slang names, these names may be descriptive of the actual drug or the effects the drug has on the user.

Acid (LSD)

Benzos (Benzodiazepine)

Big C (Cocaine)

Brown (Heroin)

Brownies (Ecstasy)

C (Cocaine)

Chasing the dragon (a particular way of smoking Heroin)

Charlie (Cocaine)

China white (a very pure white Heroin)

Clean (drug free)

Coke (Cocaine)

Cold turkey (sudden withdrawal from drugs)

Crack (Cocaine prepared for smoking)

Dope (Marijuana)

E's (Ecstasy)

Eighth (one-eighth of a pound of drugs)

Ganja (Jamaican word for Marijuana)

Gear (Heroin)

Gluey (a glue sniffer)

Grass (Marijuana)

Gym candy (Anabolic steroids)

Hash (Marijuana)

High (to be intoxicated on drugs)

Joint (a Marijuana cigarette)

Junk (Heroin)

Junkie (an opiate addict)

Meth (Methadone)

Pot (Marijuana)

Roids (Anabolic steroids)

Shoot up (to inject intravenously)

Smack (Heroin)

Snow (Cocaine)

Special K (Ketamine)

Speed (Amphetamines)

Stoned* (under the influence of drugs)

Tab (LSD)

Trip (under the influence of drugs)

Vitamin K (Ketamine)

Weed (Marijuana)

16. Miscellaneous

A lot on their plate (to have a lot of work to do, or a lot of problems to deal with)

Example:

- *My father has Parkinson's Disease and my mother has dementia, I feel like I have **a lot on my plate** at the moment*

Bent over backwards (to try as hard as you possibly can to do something, usually to please or help someone)

Example:

- *He **bent over backwards** to ensure that everything was ready on time*

Burning the candle at both ends (staying up late and getting up early)

Example:

- *I've got so much work on at the moment, I've been **burning the candle at both ends***

Burying his head in the sand (to try to pretend something unpleasant isn't happening, because you don't want to have to deal with it)

Example:

- *He has been **burying his head in the sand** since the doctor told him he had cancer*

Can't make ends meet (not enough money to buy food, clothes and other things that are needed)

Example:

- *Since I lost my job, I am really struggling to **make ends meet***

Cross that bridge when we come to it (don't waste time worrying about what might happen, but will deal with a problem if and when it does happen)

Example:

- *I'm worried that we will have to sell our house but my husband said that we can **cross that bridge when we come to it***

Don't put all your eggs in one basket (don't put all your effort, money or resources into one thing, the danger is that if that thing is unsuccessful, you risk losing everything)

Example:

- *My husband is seeing his Oncologist tomorrow, I've told him **not to put all his eggs in one basket***

Drive someone round the bend/wall (to annoy or bore them so much that they feel they are going to lose control of themselves)

Examples:

- *Peter is **driving me round the bend** at the moment*
- *Catherine is **driving me up the wall** talking all the time*

Face the music (to take responsibility for doing something wrong, and to prepare yourself for criticism or punishment)

Example:

- *I will have to **face the music** when I go back to work*

Flew off the handle (suddenly become very angry and appear out of control)

Example:

- *She **flew off the handle** when I suggested that she wasn't coping very well*

Full of beans (to be full of energy and be very active)

Example:

- *He is **full of beans**, I can't get him to sit still*

Given the sack (to lose your job)

Example:

- *He kept arriving late for work so he has been **given the sack***

Got a chip on their shoulder (they are resentful about not having the benefits that they think other people have)

Example:

- *She's got a huge **chip on her shoulder***

Got a frog in my throat (can't speak clearly because your throat is dry or hoarse)

Example:

- *I've had a **frog in my throat** since I had that cold last week*

Got butterflies in their tummy (feeling nervous about something they have to do)

Example:

- *I've got **butterflies in my tummy** about the presentation I have to do next week at work*

Got out on the wrong side of bed (in a bad mood, usually for no obvious reason)

Example:

- *She is in a terrible mood, she must have **got out of the wrong side of the bed** this morning*

Missed the boat (to miss or fail to take an opportunity to do something)

Example:

- *I think I've **missed the boat**, I should have referred that patient earlier*

Not out of the woods yet (to still be having problems or be in a difficult situation)

Example:

- *He has left the intensive care unit but he is **not out of the woods yet***

Opening a can of worms (doing something that would lead to all sorts of complicated problems)

Example:

- *I know I need to tell him, but I am worried about **opening a can of worms***

Over the moon (to be very happy about something)

Example:

- *The result came back normal, she was **over the moon** as she thought it was something sinister*

Pulling your weight (to suggest that someone is not working as hard as they should be)

Example:

- *I am getting very tired with doing all the housework, I wish the children would **pull their weight***

Rings a bell (it sounds familiar, but you can't remember exactly)

Example:

- *Have you tried Citalopram before? The name **rings a bell** but I cannot be sure*

Rock the boat (to disrupt a stable situation, usually by interfering or trying to do things differently)

Example:

- *I haven't told my husband yet as I didn't want to **rock the boat***

Square meal (a good, filling meal)

Example:

- *You will feel better once you've got a **square meal** inside you*

Start the ball rolling (to start an activity)

Example:

- *I will **start the ball rolling** by organising an x-ray of your knee, we can then consider referring you to Orthopaedics*

Take the bull by the horns (deal with a tricky situation in a direct and determined way)

Example:

- *I know it's not going to be easy, but I guess I will have to **take the bull by the horns***

The ball is in your court (it is their turn to do something or to decide what to do next before progress can be made)

Example:

- *I have told you that you need to lose weight, now **the ball is in your court***

The last straw (one final thing in a series of difficulties has made you feel that the situation is intolerable)

Example:

- *I have been feeling low in mood for a while, but losing my job was **the last straw***

Thrown in at the deep end (to be given a difficult new job or task, without any preparation)

Example:

- *I started a new job last week, I feel like I have really been **thrown in at the deep end***

Turned over a new leaf (to start behaving in a better way than before)

Example:

- *I've decided to **turn over a new leaf**, I am going to stop smoking*

Walking on eggshells (to be careful about what you say or do in case you upset someone who you think is being over-sensitive)

Example:

- *I feel like I am **walking on eggshells** every time I see her*